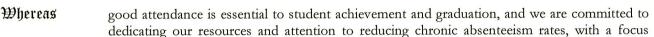


Proclamation

FOR ATTENDANCE **AWARENESS MONTH**



starting as early as preschool; and

Whereas. chronic absence - missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason including excused and

unexcused absences, or just two of three days a month - is a proven predictor of academic

trouble and dropout rates; and

Whereas. improving attendance and reducing chronic absence takes commitment, collaboration and

tailored approaches to particular challenges and strengths in each community; and

Whereas. chronic absence predicts lower third-grade reading proficiency, course failure and eventual

dropout, it weakens our communities and our local economy; and

Whereas. the impact of chronic absence hits low-income students and children of color particularly hard

> if they don't have the resources to make up for lost time in the classroom and are more likely to face systemic barriers to getting to school - such as unreliable transportation, lack of access

to health care, unstable or unaffordable housing; and

Whereas chronic absence exacerbates the achievement gap that separates low-income students from

> their peers, since students from low-income families are both more likely to be chronically absent and more likely to be affected academically by missing school. Absenteeism also undermines efforts to improve struggling schools, since it's hard to measure improvement in

classroom instruction if students are not in class to benefit from them; and

Whereas schools and community partners can reach out more frequently to absent students to

determine why they are missing school and what would help them attend more regularly; and

Whereas all students - even those who show up regularly - are affected by chronic absence because

teachers must spend time reviewing for students who missed lessons; and

Whereas. chronic absence can be significantly reduced when schools, parents and communities work

together to monitor and promote good attendance and address hurdles that keep children

from getting to school,

Dow therefore, I, Karen Heck, Mayor of Waterville, do hereby proclaim our City will stand with the nation in recognizing September as:

ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH

We hereby commit to focusing on reducing chronic absenteeism to give all children an equitable opportunity to learn, grow and thrive academically, emotional and socially.

We are going to work to do this by raising public awareness and concern about the toxic impact of chronic absence and by encouraging broad community engagement and sustained civic action to help parents get their children to school every day.

Our goal is to have all Waterville children reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade and I encourage all Waterville residents to find out how they can help us achieve that goal.

> In Witness Whereof, I do hereby set my hands and seal this 16th day of September, two thousand and fourteen.

> > Karen Heck, Mayor